

Fonas and Foshua
OR, A
CONFERENCE
BETWIXT

A Country Parson and his Parishioner,
about some of the *Clergy's* Domineering over
the *Layety*; that is, their Preaching and Vo-
ting them out of all Property in their Bodies
and Souls.

By *E. H.* and *L. M.*

Late Overseers of the Poor in *Constantine the Great's*
Parish, near the Place from whence we have the best
Well-fleet Oysters.

Tantæne animis cælestibus iræ.

Can Envoys from the Prince of Peace,
Our Feuds and Quarrels thus increase?

L O N D O N,

Printed in the Year 1706, and sold by *Benj. Bragge*, in
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CONFERENCE

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the Parsonage: that is, their Breaching and Vo-
ting them out of all Property in their Bodies
and Souls.



By E. and A. M.

The Overseers of the Poor in London the Great
Parish of St. Martin in Vintry the best
Well-wishers to the Poor.

Printed in London by J. Smith

in Strand near St. Martin's Church

1750

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(3)

Jonas and *Joshua*:

OR, A

CONFERENCE

Betwixt A

Country Parson and his *Parishioner*.

Jonas,

Parson, Yesterday Afternoon I was reading in the First of *Genesis*, and for my Life cannot get one place out of my Head ever since.

Joshua, Prethee, *Jonas*, what is that for God's sake?

Jo. You know 'tis there said, *That Man was made after the Image of God*.

Jos. True, he is so: But what should cause this more than any other place, to run so in thy Noddle.

Jo. Were I to die for't, 'twere impossible for me to rid my Thoughts of it: Sleeping or Waking, 'tis still the same with me.

Jos. I'm heartily glad to hear it, tis a very happy Thought in you, for it very much advanceth our Species above that of Brutes, and it were well if we could lead Lives answerable to so great Dignity of our Natures.

Jo. And you Priests are so well pleas'd with it, as to allow the rest of Mankind little or no Share in this Dignity, but engross it all to your own dear Selves; as if *Adam* had been created a Priest, and *Eve* the Parson's Wife; and that the rest of Men
were

were but a careless Draught taken from this Original —
Nay, wonder not, for I have a Power of Scriptures more
than this of *Genesis*, to shew you, which have been abus'd like-
wise by your blessed Tribe.

Jos. Let's have them then.

Jo. Another is, *That the Spiritual Man judgeth all Men,
but himself is judg'd of none.*

Jos. Thou talkest of not Sleeping; thou hast surely seen
a Vision — Come, come along with me, and taste one Tan-
kard of my Best, to divert this melancholy Humour.

Jo. I don't much pass if I do, since I have so fortunate-
ly met with ye: I had a main Desire to talk with ye,
tho' when I arose, I intended a Fast.

Jos. But not to come to Church, I'll warrant ye; and then
what comes Fasting to, without Prayers?

Jo. To just as much, Parson, as Prayers may do upon
such a Solemnity as this, without Fasting.

Jos. Thou weren't never bred at an University, as we have
been, where we have a Salve for every Sore. *Liquidum non Sol-
vit Jejunium*, say we.

Jo. And hey Boys up go we — What's this, but another
Wyre-drawn Text? then certainly ye have left all these
Salves or Salvos ye talk on, behind ye; for we Laymen never
found any Healers ye had, but to help your Selves.

Jos. Do'st take us for Doctors then?

Jo. Doctors! ye'r a parcel of special Trouts, be sure: For my
part, I'm much of his Mind, that said, *Devils are nothing else
but so many evil Thoughts, and malicious Affections in the Minds of
Men*; and if so, be sure there are but very few among you
Blacks, but hath a Devil for the Lining.

Jos. This is one of the prettiest railing Humours I ever
met thee in — Come, let's away then.

Jo. With all my Heart, Parson, yet something misgives
me too, and tells me within how hazardous it is keeping
Company with such blind Guides; and if the Blind lead the
Blind, you know what will be the Issue.

Jos. Never let these things disturb thee, we have a Salve
for this too among the rest, never fear, Lad.

Jo. you'd ev'n as good have let me kept my Fast, as
brought me hither, for I have a Mort more to tell ye, and
you

you must promise me too, not to be angry, that I speak my Mind freely.

Jos. See, there's my Hand for't, provided what you say be both civil and true.

Jo. If it be true, it can't be but civil, I should think.

Jos. Thou art wonderful careful of thy self, *Jonas*.

Jo. In that I'm more than half a Parson; for who more indulgent to their own dear selves, than you Parsons; but I can't blame ye for hanging an arse, in coming to account, when I consider how large and difficult it is for ye to adjust, — But this is not what I intended.

Jos. What is it thou would'st be at, if thou could'st speak?

Jo. Speak! the thing speaks enough of it self, from the grand Abuses ye have of late Years put upon the Nation, without the least Syllable of Recantation, or endeavour to set the People right in their Judgements, by recanting that linsy-woolsey passive Obedience ye have inebriated your unthinking Auditors with; but keep us at Variance ever since.

Jos. I left my House swept and garnish'd, be not thou as an evil Spirit was to *Saul*.

Jo. Swept and garnish'd! and what are these then your Gods, that they escap'd the Fate of the Besome more than the rest? Pipes and the Evangelists on a Country Vicar's Table, are alike Ornamental, with a Noggin of Brandy and the Practice of Piety at a Stew in *London*.

Jos. Forbear reflecting, *Jonas*, or we cannot be long Friends.

Jo. What will the World say of us then; but, now Knaves are out, honest Men are like to fare the better: But like it, or not like it, 'tis the same to *Jonas*, since 'tis like to pass for an Advertisement at last, at the Tail of our Discourse, instead of *Finis*, Doctor. — And I am now able to let you know, that *Gog* and *Ma-Gog*, will never accord; wherefore resolved am I to be no longer the Man I have been; two or three Glasses shall be the most with me.

Jos. What thou wilt, *Jonas*, I am never better pleas'd than to hear of Folks mending.

Jo. True; but supposing now, a Man should ask a few of you Parsons, to keep him Company in so good a way; whether would you not be ready to tell him, 'tis but one Man's Work, and do it your self? — Be it known to ye, never-

vertheless it besel me neither from the Desk, nor yet from the Pulpit, as a Man may say. — Peruse this, and give me your Thoughts of it.

Jos. Where didst thou scrape up this tatter'd Peice of Antiquity?

Jo. Oh! but 'tis all glorious within. But now I think on't again, 'tis the constant Practice of you Parsons, seldom or never to regard more than the well-binding or guilt Backs of your Books, and herein ye shew your selves very Criticks. But I must entreat the Favour of you, to make some better Use of this, for here, as in a Glasse, may ye behold the full Proportion of your Brotherhood, from the Egg to this Giant-like Proportion it appears in at this Day, and by what Means it hath attain'd it in all Ages. — If you are a Lover of Truth, let me advise you to read carefully — Come, be not so uneasy at it; you will find it markt as ye go.

Jos. Why, here he tells ye in the first place, —

Jo. He tells you Parsons — Come, don't mumble now, as if ye were fallen into a Fit of *Pater-Nostering*, after an eght or ten Miles Stage on a Sunday, when for every Responce, ye present us with a Yawn, the vending of three or four Sermons, and all before a scrap of Dinner falls to your Shares.

Jos. You will never leave, till ye rail me, *Jonas*.

Jo. The D—l take me then, if I tell ye the least of a Lie; prethee, Parson, give me the Christian Liberty you promised I should have, when I came with ye — But go on.

Jos. “ Among the Clergy, there are some so shameless, — I perceive the Spirit of the Man is —

Jo. Let me perswade you to a little more Patience, Parson; — Take it up again — As if there were none shameless of the Clergy, as among other Men; alas for 'em, innocent Hearts! What think ye of that Paragraph call'd out for their Tooth in the Page of the late Act of Grace? Was it because God's Lambs would be playing, think ye? or that the Devil's Goats were grown rampant with their Fleeces upon their Backs?

Jos. Some of us are bad enough, God knows.

Jo. Yet I fancy, that Spiritual Pride is worse than all this, by how much it comes nearest the Diabolical Excellence, and I would fain you Clergy would consider how far ye
are

are concern'd in this, for I would not that any Consanguinity should be made out 'twixt ye and the fallen Angels at the last Day.

Jos. What has wrought this Whimsy in thy Head, I would fain know.

Jo. And I would as fain know too, Parson; how it came about, that the Ambition of you Clergy-Men soar'd so high, as to cause ye to appropriate this Word *Clergy* to one only sort of Men in the World, since 'tis unknown in the Scriptures otherwise than in this Sense, *Peculiar People, God's Lot?* And so it is used for the whole Nation of the *Jews*; and why it may not for the Assembly of all Christian People throughout the World, I know not. But it has ever been your Pride to assume great things to your selves, but to be very careful how little ye deserv'd them — Do but compare now those two places, which are under your Eye, and then consider whether ye can do better for your selves, than is there done to your Hands.

Jos. "Some are so shameless, that they dare openly boast, that so only
"are fulfilled those Prophecies, whereby the Prophets describe the
"Gloriousness of the Kingdom of Christ; that is to
"say, when the Kingly Gorgeousness (and *Psalms 72. 10.*
"Swaggering) is seen in the Priestly Order; or *Isaiah 52. 1.*
"what else can be the Meaning of these Sayings, *and Chap. 69.*
"viz. *vers. 6.* *Whatsoever is any ways precious, high, or*
"excellent, that ought to be the Lords?"

Jo. In a Word, 'tis Tythable.

Jos. That must be the Meaning on't.

Jo. While ye have the Cooking of it, it must and shall be so, and you will be still licking your Fingers after your Ordination Clergy; and the like, have pass'd in the World so current, and hath bilkt the World of so much of their true Christian Liberty, by Domineering and Lording it over the People.

Jos. But for all this, there be some among us more mild and peacable than others.

Jo. Some have less Wit, else I find but very little Difference, since all of ye seek the self-same End for gratifying your Avarice, and daily Contentions with your Neighbours: And in all

all your Compositions for Peace, the Dignity of the Society must be considered, tho' by the greatest Oppression.

Jos. You would make us a Pack of the errantest Rascals. —

Jo. You have sav'd us the Labour: Ye know that ye have been upon the catch with the People for this Thousand Years; but the Pranks ye play'd these two last Reigns, by your Doctrine of Non-Resistance, Passive Obedience, and your other Holy Persecutions, cannot chuse but make ye famous in Story, and at present contemptible in the Sight of all sober Men; and I have some Reason to think too, but I forbear.

Jos. Thou can't not say worse of us, say what thou wilt next.

Jo. Yes; in my Opinion, the Curse of the late unhappy Prince's Reign, with the Hazard and Expence of the ensuing War, may justly be laid at your Doors.

Jos. He may thank his own idolatrous Crew for that, and not us, who were always ready to advise him better.

Jo. But your Philacterical Passive Obedience, still blew that Spark they had put in his Breast, until it became a Flame, by the Assurance that Doctrine gave him of the Necks of his Subjects; and so hurried him away in that aspiring Element.

Jos. But all brangling apart: Let me now know the only Cause of that of *Genesis*, chiming so much in thy Head.

Jo. I have been telling it ye ever since we came together; but since ye are so desirous of knowing farther, turn but a few Pages that way, and you shall have it at once. Go on there.

Jos. “ The Clergy's being set apart, and separated from the
“ rest of Mankind, was the most Inslaving of all Innova-
“ tions, and the giving them a distinct and opposite Interest
“ by themselves, by a Humane Ceremony, called by a Di-
“ vine Name, to wit, Ordination. —

Jo. Behold and see, how your Divinity-ships and Juredi-
vino's are laid in the Dust; a Humane Ceremony, called by
a Divine Name. Your Servant, Mr. Parson, now
Jure designo. am I glad to find my self a live, to know ye
better; this is Priest-Craft with a Witness; puzzle,
puzzle, puzzle.

Jos. But all this while thou do'st not perceive, who 'tis he

he talks of; the Popish Clergy he means.

Jo. Ye confess your selves to be reformed only, but not unpriested; and I am very apt to think too, that Priests, (Ordination Priests) of all Perswasions, are the same.

Jos. Whatever thy Opinion of them is, to be sure his is, "That they have been, and still are the Cause of all the "Solecisms and Immoralities in Governments, and of all "the Impieties, ———

Jo. How? Immoralities and Impieties! Good Lord, and that too among Divines!

Jos. "And of all the Abominations in Religion.

Jo. Who could once have thought of this, that should have met with ye on a Good-friday, or only heard ye talk your Glasse out in the Pulpit?

Jos. Prethee hold thy Noife, *Jonas*; he will be sure to throw Dirt enough upon our most Holy Order.

Jo. you've said it, Parson; but he has not done with ye yet, you'll find, ——— I think 'tis an Holy Order with a Vengeance; 'tis basely defil'd by some among ye, be sure. Well, I heartily thank my Stars, that I was neither made a Priest, nor born a Woman.

*Ne quid detri-
menti capias
Ecclesia.*

Jos. Well, let's see what he has more to say; "And of all the Disorders ——— But this is still intended of the Popish Priests and Jesuites.

Jo. Ye are all of a Litter, quoth *Lambert*. Suffer me for once to set thy Nose directly *West*, and then give me your Thoughts of those horrid Cruelties and Persecutions acted by your Party, being the Cause of two Rebellions at once; one under *Monmouth*, the other in *Scotland* by the unfortunate *Argile*; besides those other petty Acts of Piety, committed in each of your respective Parishes; and then begin to reckon how much Guilt ye have drawn upon your Heads, with respect to the suffering Parsons; but also in reference to the Souls of many others in *England*, who by your Means were deprived of Nine Thousand (most of them faithful Pastors) in one Day, that so the Wolf might have his Fill of the Sleep.

*Vide the Bar-
tholomew Act.*

Jos. Thou hast given me the Head-ach by thy Bawling.

Jo. Your Heart-ach, I could wish; for by my Troth,
C Parson,

Parson, I shew thee, this for no other Reason in the World; but the hopes I have of its being a means to save thy Soul; for here, you rustick Parsons, no sooner your Institution and Induction are obtained, your Tenths and first Fruits adjusted, but presently ye set up for Gentlemen of the *New Jerusalem*; then getting astride, with your Predecessors Roll in your Pockets, ye begin to flutter about your Parish, as if it were your Patrimony; which, let me tell ye, is as much beside the humble Station God hath appointed ye to serve in, as is the meek and painful Lives of the primitive and ancient Ministers of the Church, whose Names ye but too often prophane, while ye live so much in the Contempt of their Holy Examples.

Jos. Why, thou art raving, Man; Ads Nouns, let not the Politicks bereave thee any more of thy Sleep.

Jo. To pronounce a Man Mad, or an Atheist, (that shall reflect upon your Vices, tho' with never so much Truth on his side) hath ever been the Practice of you Priests: The Poyson whereof was first lick't up from King *Agrippa's* Tribunal. — But to the next mark'd.

Jos. "Here he informs us, That the Clergy have been entreaguing for an earthly Kingdom this Thousand Years and upwards.

Jo. No more than what I told ye before; and yet your great Master, whose Embassadors ye pretend to be, has told ye over and over, that his Kingdom is not of this World; and that he that would be the greatest among ye, should be your Minister or Spiritual Servant, according to the Context. Thus do ye honour him with your Lips, but through your Ambition, are your Hearts far from him, — But what is it he says there?

Jos. "And they have not only wrested the Scriptures to their own private Meanings for Advantage, —

Jo. The Clergy you mean. —

Jos. Lay thy Hand on thine unhallow'd Mouth; 'tis of them he writes.

Jo. Why, there 'tis; this is it that troubles my Brains, to think how ye have made the Sacred Word it self, truckle to serve your base Ends. Oh horrid Impiety! And so by such Sights as these, as the calling your selves Divine, Spiritual

Spiritual Guides, Ghostly Fathers, and what not, ye at length readily think of your selves, what a Man of your Cloth answer'd an honest Country Man, who was saying to the Minister of his Parish, *That Man was made of Clay; But* (replies the Parson) *we Ministers are made of a much finer sort of Earth than other Men.* Thus do ye vainly arrogate to your selves the Divine Indulgence, beyond the rest of your Brethren, the Sons of *Adam*, as being of the elder House, and so ought not to enjoy less than a double Portion of his Bounty and Munificence.

Jos. I find 'tis all of a Piece.

Jos. Sure enough; for he has not done with you yet, but goes on to tell ye, that the Word *Clergy* ~~Kluegs~~ in the *New Testament*, is properly taken for Believers, who also are call'd the *Elect*. — Did you Parsons, Vicars Curates, take but half the Pains in serving the Text, that ye do to make it comply with your Devices, Reverence would devote it self to you, since Vertue and Innocence command no less from the most Obdurate and Prophane: But that ye think of nothing so little, is but too palpable to be denied.

Jos. I tell ye now, as I have often from the Pulpit, That we are but Men, and subject to Infirmities with others.

Jos. Have ye no Salves, no Remedies then for these Infirmities ye thus complain of? Or do ye, Physician like, rather chose to expend your Med'cines upon others, than gain Cure from them your selves. So then, as the one by this means hath brought many to think little or nothing is to be expected from Physick; so by the dissolute Lives of a great many of your Clergy, Religion it self is left naked, and exposed to all the Assaults of Hell.

Jos. Nay, if you will believe him, he tells ye farther, " That these two Words, *Church* and *Clergy*, were never used
" in the first Ages, otherwise than to denote (without any other
" Distinction) the People assembled together; which is the true
" literal Sense of the Word *Ecclesia*, an Assembly or Meet-
" ing. Now, in these Congregations or Churches, was performed
" their Ordination, which was (notwithstanding the Buz
" and Noise they make about it) no more than a Decree of
" such an Assembly.

Jos.

Jo. Now, Parson, let me appeal to thine own dear self, whether this be not enough to set thine Hair right up on end; it doth mine to be sure, while I bethink me of the Race of Mankind, how they have been Priest-ridden for so many Ages together, and all done by a Set of Words cut and dry'd for the purpose.

Jos. Thou canst not forbear, "And upon their making Choice of a Pastor or Minister, &c. which was some Holy Man, who had Gifts and Parts, such as the Church could edify by.

Jo. Mark that; and now, what Gifts and Parts have most of you, that have not some Wo or other tackt unto them? as, *Wo unto them that rise up early in the Morning, that they may follow Strong-drink, that continue until Night, till Wine enflame them: Also, Wo unto them that are Mighty, to drink Wine, and Men of Strength, to mingle Strong-drink, &c.* If these personal Endowments will edify the Church, ye are her Champions; otherwise she must want Gifts and Parts both, to edify by. But this by the way.

Jos. There's one Wo remains, thou thinkest not of, *Jonas*.

Jo. Ay, many more than I am willing to remember at this time; but which is that?

Jos. You know 'tis also said, *Wo be unto ye, when all Men shall speak well of ye.*

Jo. Let the World judge what Care ye have taken for the preventing of such a Wo as this.

Jos. Thou canst ev'n as well leave off thy Prating, as thou canst cease to breathe, such Impertinencies being as natural to thee, as Milk to an *Essex* Calf. — But he goes on, "Nor did these Men, being thus set apart, pretend to Consecration, or Sacredness, now, any more than they did before; much less to become a distinct (fine) thing from the rest of Men.

Jo. You talk! how is it possible for a Man to contain himself in common Charity with you Black-coats, after such a Revelation as this? I hope by this, your Wonder is at an End.

Jos. Bedad, I'll see him out, since I have gou so far, —
"As if they had Metamorphos'd ———

Jo.

Jo. 'Shud, that's a deadly hard Word, — Prethee, Parson, lend's your Light here a little.

Jos. Such Fellows as you know but too much of Letters.

Jo. Duce on't, now do I smell a Rat. I'll warrant ye 'twas your hopeful Advice, that set your Neighbour, Parson *My-Court* a tip-toe, to demand Money of a poor industrious Woman of your own Parish, for presuming to teach Children their *A. B. C.* threatening her, that in Case she taught any longer in so licentious a way, he would Anatomize her.

Jos. Anathematize her, you would say; yet in a Spiritual Sense, 'tis much the same thing, as if he should have said, he would have hew'd this Wife of *Agag* in pieces; which you know was the Priest's Office: Yet are there some sober People, who call his Prudence much in question, for so great Rashness.

Jos. And who be they?

Jo. Tho' they may be none possibly of the Rabbies of your Fraternity, others, as wise and good as their Divinity-ships, look upon it as a peice of Peevishness, which is too subject to break forth upon so suddain a Change of a Man's Fortune; for suddain Joys, like Grief, (you know) are apt to confound at first; and I am ready to think, that such Exploits will do his Master but little Service.

Jos. Pishan, phau, 'tis requir'd in Stewards, that they be faithful.

Jo. Dear *Joshua*, advise him this once from me, once in a Week to read over the Epistles, one or both of them appointed to be read at the Ordaining of a Priest, which perhaps may prove Physick to his Choler, by composing him the better to discern the different Zeal of a meer Pedant, from that of a faithful Steward of the Mysteries of Christ. But upon second Thoughts, 'tis not impossible to think, but that this trustly Arch-Prelate may nurse up this Zeal of his, to some greater End than we are aware of.

Jos. Thou art not ready either to say or believe very well of us Divines: Give me now thy Sense of this peevish Action of his, as you are pleased to call it.

Jo. I see the Man loves to appear active and busy, and therefore fittest of all for Action. Blind *Byard* will take

Ditch and Hedge, and all, — I profess I am even amaz'd at the Conduct of this same Patriarch, Primate, Arch-Bishop, (or what else ye make of him) when I observe how far he hath out-strip'd the very Councils at Rome; for while they but paddle in the Politicks, this *Courageo* wades ye Chin deep; and instead of suspending only the Evangelical Laws, by licensing some few to read the Bible, and forbidding others, which you know is the Practice of those puny Wits. He, to make sure Work on't, rescinds their whole Christian *Magna Charta*, in taking care they shall never know one Letter in the Book.

Jos. It was foolishly enough done of him, — but we are to have no more of this, only proceed to the next with all possible Calmness.

Jos. I have but a Word or two more to offer, and to leave you to be sentenc'd by your own private Thoughts.

Jos. Let's have it then in a Word.

Jos. By the Rules this Parlon *My Court* follows in his Province, 'tis evident how little Cause we have to thank ye for the small Knowledge we Lay-men have in Matters of Civil Right, while ye trade so much in the Politicks; but rather to such as is the Author of what I here shew you, our grateful Acknowledgements become due; for he 'tis that hath crack'd your mystick Divinities, and dropt the Kernel for such inconsiderate Animals as we, to nibble on.

Jos. there be but few of these things, but are above the Capacity of a Multitude.

Jos. Then without doubt the Writer of this Book must be one of this Multitude; for sure enough he does not rightly understand your Ordination, Clergy, Church, and the like.

Jos. He is a very broad Fellow; but 'tis beyond the Reach of meer Lay-men, I tell ye to fathom the Mysteries of our Function.

Jos. Well, Parlon, to sum ye up in a Word, ye are a parcel of Dark-lanterns, except when your own dear Cause comes to Stake; and then the Pulpits shine bright with Light and Counsel; but when it is in special with us, your Lay-Brethren of the younger House, for the Support of the Rights of the People, then with the turn of a Hand, Sir, this very Light's obscur'd, and for all the World, like Batts, every

every Man of ye think himself most at ease, and safe in his own proper Cell.

Jos. Thou art but too full of thy Parables, to be good Company to Day, *Jonas.*

Jo. But, Parson, as to the Sense of that hard confounded Word I ask'd your Advice about but now, *Meta—Meta—* what do ye call it? — I find you very dumb upon the Matter, either thou art ignorant of what it means, or damnable loath to tell Tales.

Jos. I'm bound to make my Word good to thee to Day, and I will perform accordingly.

Jo. Faith, and that's no ordinary thing with you to do, unless where you're appointed to take Money.

Jos. Well, *Jonas*, 'tis no very great Happiness to meet with thee upon a Fast-Day Morning, for an empty Stomack makes thy Brains grow infernally. Nevertheless I cannot easily away with your Reflections on these Sacred Words, the Badges of our Holy Order.

Jo. If an Untruth drop from my Lips, deal by me as shall most suit the Dignity of your Order, as ye call it, and so far as that will go, thou shalt not fail of it Faith Parson. But to let ye see how unwilling I am to put your Cause to so much Torture, as will be the nipping it to Death with red-hot Pincers, turn to the next, and you shall meet with what will stab it to the Quick.

Jos. I have already meet with more than I could have well expected, and cannot but admit most of what he says to be Truth: But notwithstanding all this, 'tis not easy for a Clergy-man to reconcile himself to such a Temper.

Jo. Without Dispute he must be a Man whom some of you Parsons have worried sufficiently, ere ye could have forc'd him to talk thus plainly of your Order. But 'tis no Wonder, since by your haughty Behaviour, and un sanctified Dealings, ye have now at length cut the Thread of your own Fate.

Jos. Now thou talkest of Fate, give me leave to tell thee a Story, which comes now in my Head, 'tis of a certain Egyptian King, who was so zealously bent about an Obelisk.

Jo. Thou skippest from one side to t'other, so that a Man cannot well tell where to have ye.

Jos.

Jos. 'Tis highly convenient, that Men of Ordination should be found altogether without their blind Sides in this catching Age.

Jo. But what do st thou mean, Parson, by this Obelisk? is it Fish or Flesh?

Jos. Ye Fool; 'tis a mighty Pillar of Stone-Work.

Jo. Your Servant, Master Parson; you know best whose Fool I have been for this 16 Years. But I find by your frank informing me of this Word, it matters not how much we Fools understand of Stocks and Stones, since they will neither tell Tales, nor see Faults. I beg your Pardon for my interrupting you in your Story.

Jos. You know I am to stand by all thine Impertinences to Day; but to go on with my Story. "This Egyptian King, fearing that in the raising of so vast a Weight, either through the Negligence of the Work-men, or Weakness of the Engine, this Obelisk might fall: He therefore ordered, that his Son should be ty'd to the Top of it, that so the Care of his Safety, might make the Work-men more circumspect in the Business."

Jo. This Story now has wrought up the subtlest Drop of Poyson from thy very Heart-root, and indeed of all your Church Props: I am as fully acquainted with the Intent of this Story, as if I were as very — a Parson as thy self.

Jos. Ben't so big neither of thy Knowledge, *Jonas*; can't thou Divine the Thoughts of a Man's Heart?

Jo. Very well, Parson, and with as much ease as 'tis to conceive what's in the Guts of a Spider, while she spins and knits her Webb to deceive her Prey. And except you render me such Reason for your telling me this Story, as I shall like, I shall take leave to use the same Freedom as I'm forc'd to do many times after the Text is nam'd.

Jos. How is that? How is that, *Jonas*?

Jo. Why, look ye, put the Case the Text were *Mint* and *Cumin*, the Sin of with-holding Tythes must necessarily be bandy'd about. Or supposing the Story of the Childrens deriding the Prophets, were to be read, in calling them Bald-pate, Bald-pate, then the Contempt of the Clergy must be condemn'd, Bell, Book, and Candle, and the Cushion dusted enough to put a Man's Eyes out, that sits nigh ye; and

and all this, tho' the Priests be the vilest Men living; To that with the greatest ease a Man may learn by the Woofe, what the Web must be.

Jos. Prethee give me thy Sense of the Story then thy self, for thy Conceits are notable to Day.

Jo. Why, supposing now it were but in the Power of you Clergy, to gain an Act of Parliament for the tying up all true Patriots; that is to say, one to every Stone, which you of the Holy Order shall think fit to lay, for the raising of St. Paul's to the height of St. Peter's at Rome: Would ye not readily conclude with your selves, how pat a way it might be to remove those Impediments, which are apt to stock her Growth; for ye know Men are very ware of acting in hazard of their Necks? And tho' there may be many Zealots, yet but few that will die Martyrs.

Jos. *Jonas, Jonas*, this is a serious Matter; we ought to have great Veneration and Love for our most Holy Mother Church; since Religion is not only the principal Part of Righteousness, but also the Soul, wherewith it breathes.

Jo. True and undefiled Religion is so indeed. But this is not mew'd up 'twixt a pair of whispering Walls, or blended with a parcel of Human Rites and Ceremonies, nor yet truss'd up in a Gown and Caslock, or swaddled with a Surfengle. Which present us rather with a *Summer-set-House* Baby, than any thing worthy so venerable a Name as Religion: Wherefore if the stiff adhearing to these, rather than bearing and forbearing one another, be your Religion, to be free with ye, Parson, in my Opinion, he that stands farthest off, is the best Christian.

Jos. This is but one Doctor's Opinion.

Jo. It was also one Doctor's Opinion to upbraid those, whose Cry upon every slight Occasion, was, *The Temple, the Temple*. And another Doctor's Opinion it was to rebuke those bigotted *Ephesians*, whose chief Fear was, that their Priest-craft would be taken from them. A Tincture of which four Leaven hath been ever since running in the Veins of you Clergy-men, as if at your first commencing the Priest-hood, ye had taken in some Drug that had Power to render ye more morose and cynical, than the rest of Men.

Jos. Thou art mightily upon the high Ropes to Day.

Jo. I am perfectly enraged at your Hypocrisy, while ye pretend these things to be indifferent, and yet are so obstinate in maintaining them, that ye readily forfeit the Peace of three Kingdoms, rather than condescend to the parting with that, which is neither worthy the Thoughts of a good Man, or a Scholar, to dispute: And yet so great is your hood-wink'd Zeal for these Toys, that should an honest Man but lift a Straw against the Church, presently ye turn Separatists, make new Sets of Prayers, cry out, *The Church, the Church is falling about your Ears*.

Jos. Yet is it not fit Lay-men should have to do in Church Affairs.

Jo. I'm sure 'tis an abominable Shame; Parsons should meddle in State-Matters; or that such as have been bred on the Charity of a free School, or the Endowments of a Colledge, without a Foot of Land they can call their own, should by their Votes, in all Elections, have the Disposal of other Mens Estates; to the Bounty of whose Ancestors, possibly it is they are oblig'd for the Bread they eat.

Jos. And 'tis to these Ancestors ye talk of, that we are beholden for the Right we have in Elections too.

Jo. Nay, they have been woundy kind to ye, enough; I should think, to encourage ye (since ye are so hot upon the not parting with your Ceremonies, &c.) to petition for such an Act as we but lately mentioned; and there is but little Doubt of their ready Compliance with you in so small a Request.

Jos. Thou wouldst give thy Ears to see the Boys hallowing at our Heels.

Jo. 'Tis in vain to dissemble with ye any longer; for my part, I look upon ye as Men desperate, and 'tis but likely, that the greater your Contempt may be, the more certain may be your Reformation. — Do but read there a while.

Jos. And the elected Pastors were wont to attend the several Functions of their Calling, as preaching the Word, visiting the Sick,

Jo. And I pray, what are your Visits to be accounted of by us, but so many direful Visitations, while some of ye compel us to pay for a few Book-Prayers, tho' Money be wanting oftentimes to buy Oat-meal for Use in our Sickness.

Nay,

Nay, if it so fall out, (as oftentimes it does) that the Parish be constrain'd to bury at their common Charge, by reason of the Inability of the Deceased; yet so great is your Inhumanity, and lack of Charity, as to cause the Parish to pay for the breaking up of their own Ground. O Generation of Vipers! this is it that hath made so many among us die like Heathens, destitute of all Ghostly Comfort.

Jos. Peace, Peace, *Jonas.*

Jo. And behold War and Confusion, is your Design; do but read, for your better Information, the Form of Prayers lately compil'd for the Use of you *Jacobites*; they have as many Eyes as *Argus*, glaring into every Age; so they may but save their Pudding at the last; for by my Troth, neither King *William*, nor the late King *James*, had any great Cause to thank ye for the Devotion, since neither of them were nam'd, but ye pray'd still for an unknown King.

Jos. Thou art so full of Fancy, that a Man cannot readily tell what thou mean'st here. — “And never intermitted the ordinary Business of their Trade or Profession, unless their Congregations were very numerous.”

Jo. Stop a little; here some of ye have been indeed more primitive, than others of your Brethren, while their whole Weeks Labour, from Monday till Saturday Night, has been spent altogether about their Temporals; which I cannot on one Account, but look upon as commendable in them, as well suiting their personal, as the other Abilities of their Minds; for let who will cast an impartial Eye upon them, he will be apt enough to sware, Ordination hath spoil'd a Multitude of muckle Farmers.

Jos. I count most of us have as right Judgments in those Affairs, as any among ye, let the next be who he will.

Jo. Nevertheless it raises my Wonder something too, when I consider how Men, that are Ministers, and ought more especially to subject themselves to the Powers, not only for Fear, but for Conscience sake, should dare so live in a daily Violation of those known Laws of the Kingdom, which so strictly prohibit Farming and Grazing in the Clergy.

Jos. Thou knowest but very little indeed, if thou art ignorant, that by Noise chiefly 'tis we top the World, and hug

lug the Necks of the People (as these Thumbs) under our Girdles; nor is their any one thing so sure a Card in a Parson's Hand, as an inveterate and obstinate Humour.

Jo. That is to say, your Pride and Ambition, which indeed is the running Scab of the Church in these Days, as well as in former Ages: Nevertheless, had you been silent, our Experience had given us the Assurance of it many a fair Day since. *What? will ye not love, ye shall fear me then,* was the Text ye have stuck the closest to of any: This is one too of your aspiring Salvos, to call Fire from Heaven, if it were possible, for the Gratification of your proud, peevish Tempers, — But pass on to the next mark'd, for a Word or two of Consolation.

Jos. I'm not half so disturb'd at the Book, as at the Noise thou makest in mine Ears, there being nothing of greater Truth, than of some of us making too bold with the Lord's Heritage. But here he carries all before him, "And from the Words, *Church, Clegy, Ordination, &c.* you see what Conclusions these Men have made to serve their Interest in the World.

Jo. Never was the Meaning of these Words so faithfully rendered to us before! but still kept in Lavender by you Parsons, as so many Charms to cajole us Lay-men into a blind Obedience, that we might dance after your Pipes.

Jos. Thou may'st very well spare thy Breath, *Jonas*, and leave him to shift for himself; for on my Word, he's able to do it: He goes on, and says, "And what a Power have they gain'd, —

Jo. For all the World, as if ye had been so many Generals commissioned by the Lord of Hosts.

Jos. We are the Ministers of the Lord of Hosts.

Jo. Oh the Ambition and Thirsting of you Priests after Damnation! Do but shew me one Text, Parson, from the First of *Matthew*, to the last of the *Revelations*, where God is stil'd the Lord of Hosts, and I will give up the Cause, and for ever after pay Homage to your Divinitiships, deeming it to be as real and unfeign'd, as now I believe it to be both forg'd and human. He is often called the Prince of Peace, for which very Reason many of you Hot-Spurs (were it not for the sake of some fat Benefices

neſſices they are in league with) could find in their Hearts to deſert the Cauſe of ſo meek and condeſcending a Lord and Maſter.

Joſ. Look you to your ſelf, *Jonas*, and judge not, but leave us to the Diſcharge of our Duties.

Jo. Did not the greateſt part of ye live the Lives of the worſt of Men, it were not ſo eaſy a Matter for us to rate ye: But if there be one ſincere Sinner in the Pariſh, the Parſon's the Man.

Joſ. The Truth is, we Parſons are much beholden to ſuch foul-mouth'd Fellows as you.

Jo. Your ill Manners are they which cry loudeſt againſt ye; and ſhould we forbear, the very Groves and Woods would reſound the ſame in your Ears.

Joſ. Well, well, be but contented a little, and he tells ye in the next Page, what muſt be done to make us better, and the World more eaſy.

Jo. Eaſy? You Parſons look upon us of the Laiety, to be a ſort of Men, who will not be contented, except we have a new Heaven, and a new Earth to dwell in. Miſtake us not; good, dear Parſon, but ſatisfy your ſelves, that 'till Judgment begin at the Houſe of God, we ſhall have no thorough Reformation.

Joſ. Spoke like a Prophet! — Why? he is now doing it for ye, if ye obſerve what follows here. “But how eaſily will this Power of theirs fall to the Ground, being built on ſo narrow and ſandy a Foundation, when God ſhall inſpire Chriſtian Princes, &c. to redeem his Truths, and poor enſlaved Members, out of their Clutches, that ſo we may enjoy the true original Chriſtian Liberty, — What's this now? but to exclude all manner of Religion out of the World

Jo. Hey Day! what now? Let a Man talk but never ſo little of withdrawing your Power, and ye are ready immediately to hit your Noddles at him: For unleſs, forſooth, we will receive the Religion of your Brains, your Concluſions run, that we will have none at all. Yes, ſee what follows.

Joſ. “So much more conſiſtent with moral Vertue and Integrity, of which the World hath been ſo long deprived.

Jo. Whether now in the reſtoring all this to us, ſhall we have more or leſs Religion, think ye? But read on.

Jos. "By the execrable and innate Quality, inseparable
 "from Priests, after the Conjurat[i]on and Spell of their new
 "invented Ordination, through which they pretend to so
 "much Sacredness, and by which alone 'tis they cry with
 "the Poet,

*Jam furor Humanum nostro de pectore sensum
 Expulit Et totum spirant præcordia Phœbum.*

"That they have little or nothing of Integrity, or indeed,
 "of Humanity left in them.

Jo. Ay, and these very Men have the Confidence to be-
 lieve, at least, to profess themselves the only Instruments,
 whom God hath chosen, or can chuse, to teach and reform
 the World.

Jos. Bating the Failings of some of us, so they be.

Jo. Be me no Be's. What are even the choicest among ye,
 more than the Cream of the Jest, as having neither moral
 Vertues, or natural Parts, for the most part equal to other
 Men? But going on, you'll meet with it all in your way.

Jos. "Yet have they by such Pretences as these, so far pre-
 "vail'd upon the People, and 'till within an Age or two,
 "upon some of the better Sort, that they are perswaded, that
 "their Salvation, or eternal Damnation, depends upon believing
 "or dis-believing what they say, — Well, *Jonas*, and this is
 the Fellow destin'd to carry thee to Heaven, and none else?

Jo. One Dram of your Patience but for a Line or two,
 and you shall see the way he will take to bring me thither;
 neither in a Sling, nor a Pick a Pack, I promise ye, you'll find
 him to be a Man of Morals.

Jos. I'm very desirous, if possible, of knowing what he
 would be at, for as yet I ken him not.

Jo. If your Patience be upon the Wing, there 'tis for ye:
 Now ye have him both Body and Soul, at a view under
 your Hand, you see 'tis mark'd.

Jos. "I would not be understood all this while, to
 "disswade any from honouring the true Apostolical Ministers
 "or Preachers of the Word, — And I pray what are we?

Jo. Are ye? The World says, that three parts in four of ye
 are a parcel of heady and scandalous Make-bates in the
 Church; and I, among the rest, do say so too, that until
 some Course be taken to remove such effectual Instruments
 in the Church for the Ruin of Souls.

Jos.

Jos. What then?

Jo. Why, I say, till then, your Holy Mother Church will have but little Peace either with God or in her self.

Jos. Thou accountest still of us Parsons, as the off-scouring of the World.

Jo. I tell ye again and again, 'tis your selves have done it; and I dare say, that the Lives abundance of ye lead, have made more Reprobates, than all the lewd Fellows in the Nation beside.

Jos. Thou do'st not thoroughly know us.

Jo. Nor even they, who should have known ye better; which is a thing to be lamented, otherwise we had most certainly gained so much upon ye, at the least, as to have obtain'd some wholesome Laws, as might have given a Check to this Priestly Exorbitance in ye.

Jos. For all this mad Rage of the World against us of the Clergy, and their sentencing us as the worst of Men; be it known to you, and all such Railers, there was a Man, a Minister too, in a very great and populous City, who, when he came first thither to preach the Gospel, found but seventeen Christians; and when he was dying, gave God thanks he should leave but seventeen Pagans behind him.

Jo. I'll warrant you, Parson, this Story bears date long before the Year of her Holiness Pope Joan.

Jos. I'm now serious with you; it was so.

Jo. Very good; why then it must be of a certain about that time too when Happiness was of greater moment with you Parsons, than Sovereignty; when the Priests viewed themselves much in the Glass of the Scriptures; before Flaxen Wigs, or smerk Parsons came in Fashion; and they had this Axiom frequently in their Mouths; viz. *Glorious is Poverty in the Priests of the Lord*: But I forbear naming any more at present, being well assur'd of the Course your Friend *My Court* intends to steer, who has a List of the Names and Actions of these Worthies; and by reason of their primitive and excellent Humility, does intend to present them for Examples to the rest of the Brother-hood, upon his next Ecclesiastical Summons.

Jos. You must be Roguing, and there's no help for it. I tell ye, it was in the primitive Days, when things were thus orderly manag'd. Did I say primitive; it was in the earliest Days of the Apostles.

Jo.

Jo. I was confident it could not be since the Restauration; tho' to deal ingeniously with you, Parson, notwithstanding some Mens Opinions for not allowing of a credible Maintenance to the Ministry, yet am I clearly for it, and heartily desire it might be such an Allowance as might enable them chearfully to perform the Duties of their respective Cures.

Jos. We thank ye, *Jonas*, for your generous Inclination towards us, however ye take upon ye to reprove us.

Jo. Mistake me not, good Parson: I am talking of Labourers, not Loiterers in the Lord's Vineyard.

Jos. All this while that Christian Charity is wanting in you, which you ought to have, since they that came at the twelfth Hour, had like Wages, &c.

Jo. For all that the Lord of the Harvest may do as he pleases; none shall have my Pence, but such as undergo the Heat and Burthen of the Day.

Jos. Why, this Book has made a very Disciple of thee.

Jo. Mark him now with a little more Circumspection, and observe how he advanceth in Judgement against ye in the Power of Truth and Argument. Read him in that Paragraph.

Jos. "There can never be a perfect Reformation, till these Men be wholly rooted out, and not the least Fibre left, which otherwise will be enough to over-run the Lord's Vineyard again."

Jo. Nor am I so much for rooting them out, as pruning and cultivating them from the Luxury of their Lives; and so from the most poysonous Drugs, may be produced the best Medicines.

Jos. Thou wilt never find all Men to be of one Temper of Mind, while this World endures; nor will all Men be found with Gifts and Parts alike; and 'tis great Pitty such should want a Livelyhood.

Jo. I am no very fond Man of an incomprehensive Charity, nor yet am I for pushing on a Zeal without Knowledge. Thro' the want of a right Distinction of these things, it is, that so many Disorders happen in the World among honest and good Men, as among Knaves and Fools.

Jos. Prethee what would thy Charity be towards such Men as these?

Jo. I look upon Pitty to Mens Persons and Families, to

be the greatest Cruelty, when the Ruin of Souls, by their Negligence, Ignorance, ill Example, or the like, must be the necessary Consequence of such Practices. Wherefore, if Men be not qualified as they ought, in order to the saving those Souls they have taken Charge of; let them, in the Name of God, lay by their Preachments, and give place to some others, who are really fitted for the Work, and they betake them to some other Calling, of which they may be more capable.

Jos. 'Tis now Church-time, and we must part.

Jo. I know you're a Canonical Man, if you can but reach it.

Jos. What do'st mean by reaching it?

Jo. What makes ye so ignorant to ask that Question?

Jos. Verily, I understand thee, not.

Jo. Then verily, Parson, like such, whose Habits of Vice being become a second Nature to them, have really stifled the Sense of Good and Evil so much in them, as to render them ignorant of an Evil, even when they commit it: So you, having made a Breach of the Canons of your Church for so many Years together, think you are in Arrears to her upon no Account whatever.

Jos. Prethee unfold this Riddle; for by my Troth, *Jonas*, I am as thou sayest, very ignorant of thy Meaning in this Particular.

Jo. What think ye of your middle Stage on Sunday, and whether reading Common Prayer 'twixt Twelve and One a Clock at that place, be either a Canonical or a fit Hour for People to come to Church, that have Families?

Jos. Oh! are ye thereabouts? Well, well, I'll make Answer to that at another Season.

Jo. Or in another place. Faith I commend your Discretion; for were I to fast for my Life, and I had taken Ordination upon it, I could not do better, there being no such healthful Custom in the World, as to make good Use of a jolly Toast in a Tankard of Stout, when one begins a Fast to K—
W—, &c.

Jos. Wheep, *Jonas*, thou hast utterly pass'd by thy old Grievance: Is not this one of my Stage-Days? Am I not to read Prayers and to Preach at three Parishes at least to Day? Where-

fore a Man of my Business, as he hath great Layings out, his Layings in too, ought surely to bear some Proportion therewith; besides, a Man will fast much the better for it.

Jos. Poor Man; I ought to have considered better, I confess; but were there now an Election on foot for choosing a Knight of the Shire, how readily would you quit the Fast, Toast, Tankard, and all, to spur away, and help Dry-Nurse, Mother Church, in hopes of another persecuting Issue?

Jos. I'm very apprehensive of what you drive at.

Jo. You know then how foolishly, not to say impudently, it was done of you Parsons, to take no more notice of the Royal Proclamation, than of a waste piece of Paper; but to run a Whoring after your own Inventions.

Jos. The Case lay hard upon us, being constrain'd by our Ordinary.

Jo. It grieves me to see how much Stress ye lay upon this poor saint Creature *Ordination*! Now, your Neighbour, Parson *My-Court*, tells Folks, that the Bishop has nothing to do with him; and that for his part, he is quite out of his Lordship's Jurisdiction.

Jos. That may well enough be, for 'tis his Avery.*

* Signifying a place to put Provender or Corn in. *Jo.* Plain Dealing's the best, Parson; let's therefore have no more of your old *Sumpsinus*'s. What canst thou mean by calling it his Avery? his Habitation, Order, or what?

Jos. His Meal-tub or Grainary, if you please.

Jo. There is a special Tie in a Draught of Stout, as well, to carry about the Sails of Fancy, as to help out with a solemn Fast. This is the first that hath appear'd ingenious from ye to Day; therefore help's to the Key, that we may not lose the Jest; 'tis finely hinted, and I wish you so happy as to make it as well out.

Jos. Why, *Jonas*, we that are Men of Letters, know very well, that Bread or Bread-corn, are very often put, both by prophane and sacred Writers, for Plenty, or a Man's Substance. Now, this being his All, he is ready to look upon every one, who may be apt to serve himself in this Avery of his, to be a Rat or other Devourer of his Stock.

Jo. The first I ever heard of terming a Church-Preferment an Avery.

Jos. Come, *Jonas*, since thou art willing to be instructed, I'll take a little Pains with thee, to inform thee better about it. You must know, that the Word *Avery*, is an old *Brittish*, or *Saxon* Word, and so very aptly befits the Occasion, in which we use it. You must know also this is a sort of Cure too he enjoys, the like not to be met with either in *Fuller*, *Heylin*, or *Dr. Burnet's* Church Histories; being a Church without a Head or Bishop belonging to it; and for this Reason it may be call'd an *Avery*.

Jo. Or a Barn either: What a peice of Headlessness is this. Surely this Parson *My-Court* must have come from some very far and

and barbarous Country, since he understands the Government of the *English* Church no better.

Jos. Nor his Institution Oath, sure enough; for had he known either as he ought, he would have understood his Duty to his Diocesan, who is the sole Pastor of all the Presbyters, People, and Flocks of his Diocese; and that the Presbyters or Ministers are accounted but as his Delegates or Curates, to whom they are accountable also, both for their Doctrine and Discipline in the Church: But notwithstanding all this, he thinks it meet to obey his Ordinary *Pro Lic* and *Nunc* as in the Case of the King's Proclamation, and the Bishop's Letter to call them to the Elections.

Jo. What do'st thou mean by this *Hic et Nunc*?

Jos. As if I had said, to serve a Turn.

Jo. An incomparable *Hic et Nunc Salvo*, this, as for Instance, to help off with that great *Dilemma*, in keeping a Fast at Home, or no Fast, but riding 30 Miles to an Election. Now, whether was this the *Hic* or the *Nunc* Season with you Parsons? Doubtless the *Nunc*, for ye were expressly commanded to attend the Election.

Jos. And supposing all this, the next third Wednesday in the Month was the *Hic* with us; for I promise ye, we kept the Fast most devoutly, since we poor forsaken *Israelites* were so forc'd to quit the Field, and our Cause both, and leave them to the Mercy of you *Hittites*.

Jo. For all the great Stir and Noise ye make of keeping the Fast upon the next Wednesday, you, for your part, paid your Homage to the brown Loaf in the first place, as you were wont to do upon a Stage-day, and your Neighbour *My-Court*, to my Knowledge, turn'd *Grumblestonian* for some time before, saying, they (meaning the King and Bishops, I suppose) were resolv'd we should have Work enough; and by my Faith, Parson, according to the Rate of your Pains-taking, two seventh Days in one Week is hard Service. Now, by this a Man may guess at the Fast ye kept.

Jos. Should I stay with ye longer, I should keep no Fast at all; which will make a Man look very much like a Delinquent; and you know, tho' we have taken the Oaths, the People are but too ready to harbour ill Thoughts of us.

Jo. How can they think otherwise, while a great many of ye, that have taken the Oaths, never pray for the King and Queen in your Pulpits, as Defenders of the Faith; and in that pompous Stile ye were wont to pray for a Popish King?

Jos. We pray heartily for him in the Desk.

Jo. Why, look ye Parson; he that is a good Man, or a Loyal Subject, only because the Law obliges him to it, seems to me a Trimmer in the worst Sense, and may justly be thought such a sort of Liege-man as will be a Traytor at his next opportunity.

Jos. This is but thy private Opinion of us.

Jo.

Jo. It happened to be the Opinion too of some great Men, where I was in Company to other Day, by what then pass'd among us; but one thing I would you should take notice of, falling from the Mouth of a very intelligent Gentleman: These Parsons says he, are such a powerful sort of Fellows, that like Vermin, they secretly nibble away the Foundation of a Government.

Jos. This intelligent Gentleman had never heard surely, who said, No Bishops no King.

Jo. Yes, but he had, and knew he was both King and Judge too in his own Cause, when he spake it: A sort of Quails you Priests have a woundy Hankering after, when Trade comes in again at *Duchers Commons*. But there was another Fling at ye too.

Jos. And how was that, I pray?

Jo. That he could not think ye had your Rise from any other Stock, than that of *Cham*, since your Self-conceitedness and Malice have run so insufferably high, that scarce an old Wife's Saying can come in your ways, but ye will cross the Shins on't.

Jos. Prethee, *Jonas*, how is that, because I'm in haste?

Jo. There's no new Election, for *M—*'s confirm'd.

Jos. The Joak, the Joak is what I stay for.

Jo. Here 'tis then, viz. 'tis an old Saying, spake a Gentleman that stood by, that Parliaments can do every thing, but make a Woman a Man. That's not so, said a Parson, (who was nigh at hand) for there's somewhat else they cannot do. What's that call'd, the Company? Make an Oath we Parsons will not take, reply'd the Parson.

Jos. Thou art a very Wag, *Jonas*, but we'll be more serious at our next Meeting.

Jo. The Matter will then require it, we shall read but those few Lines more; I know ye love Poetry, and so we'll knock off now.

What great Perfections can these Parsons get,

Who far from Practice, only strive to prate;

Who learn their Science, as an Art to gain,

And wanting Salt, would Season Souls in vain;

Who, to buy Earth, do sell out Shares in Heaven;

And drive a Trade with what is freely given?

Vile Avarice and Pride! from Heaven accurst,

In all Men bad, but in a Church-man worst.

F I N I S.

